

Linking Land with Language: Documenting and Reclaiming Kwak'wala Plant Names on Canada's Northwest Coast

K'akotlatlano'xw xa kwakwax'mas
“We are going to learn about plants”

Andrea Lyall | Tłaliłlogwa, Daisy Rosenblum, Mark Turin
Saturday, March 2, 2019 Asia Room
ICLDC 6: Connecting Communities, Languages & Technology

INTRODUCTIONS



Andrea Lyall



Daisy Rosenblum



Harry Nelson



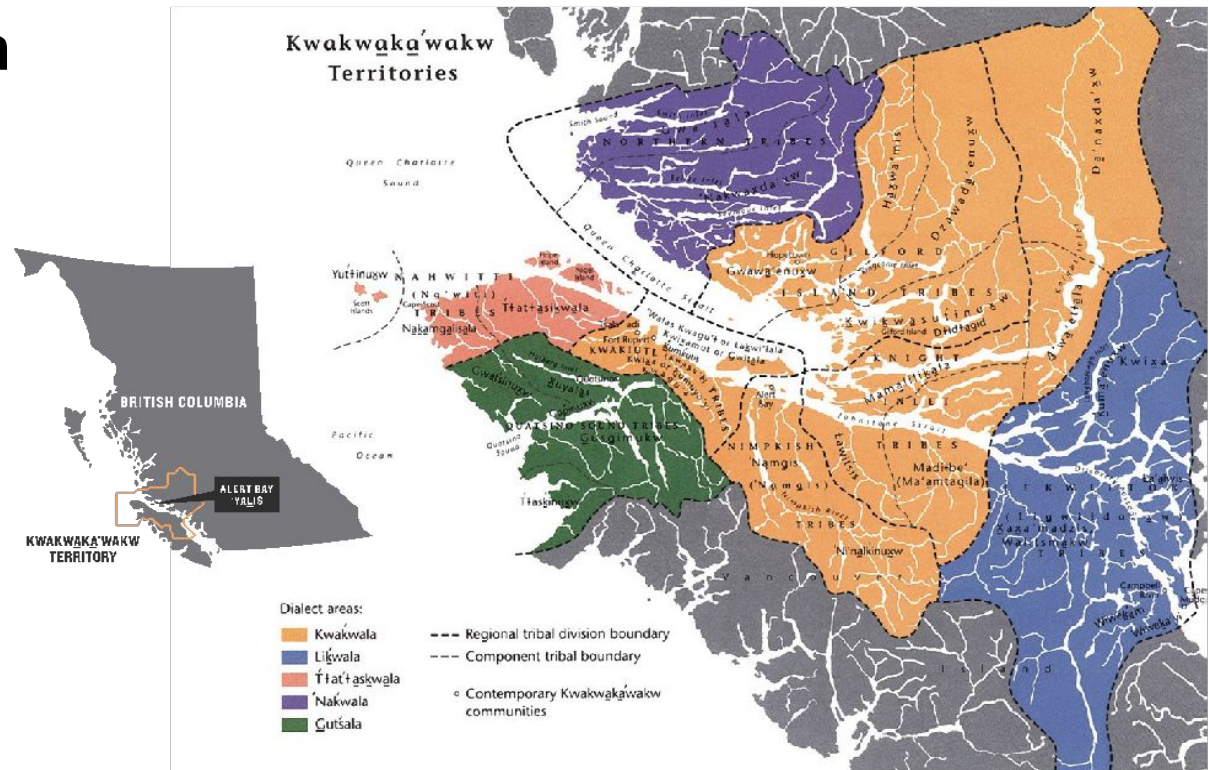
Mark Turin

BACKGROUND

KWAKWAKA'WAKW TERRITORY

This is an in-depth study about about plant names and phrases in Kwakwaka.

This praxis-based research was multi-faceted and worked across disciplines.



BLM 1B

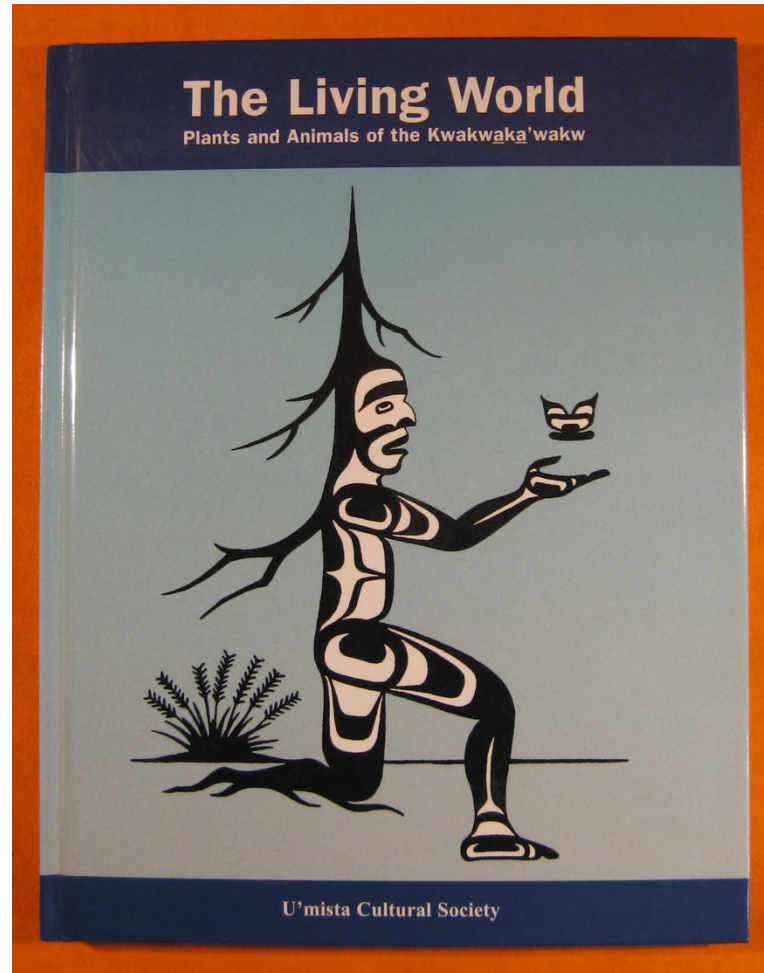
(U'mista Cultural Society. 2019)



INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES & INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE FORESTS

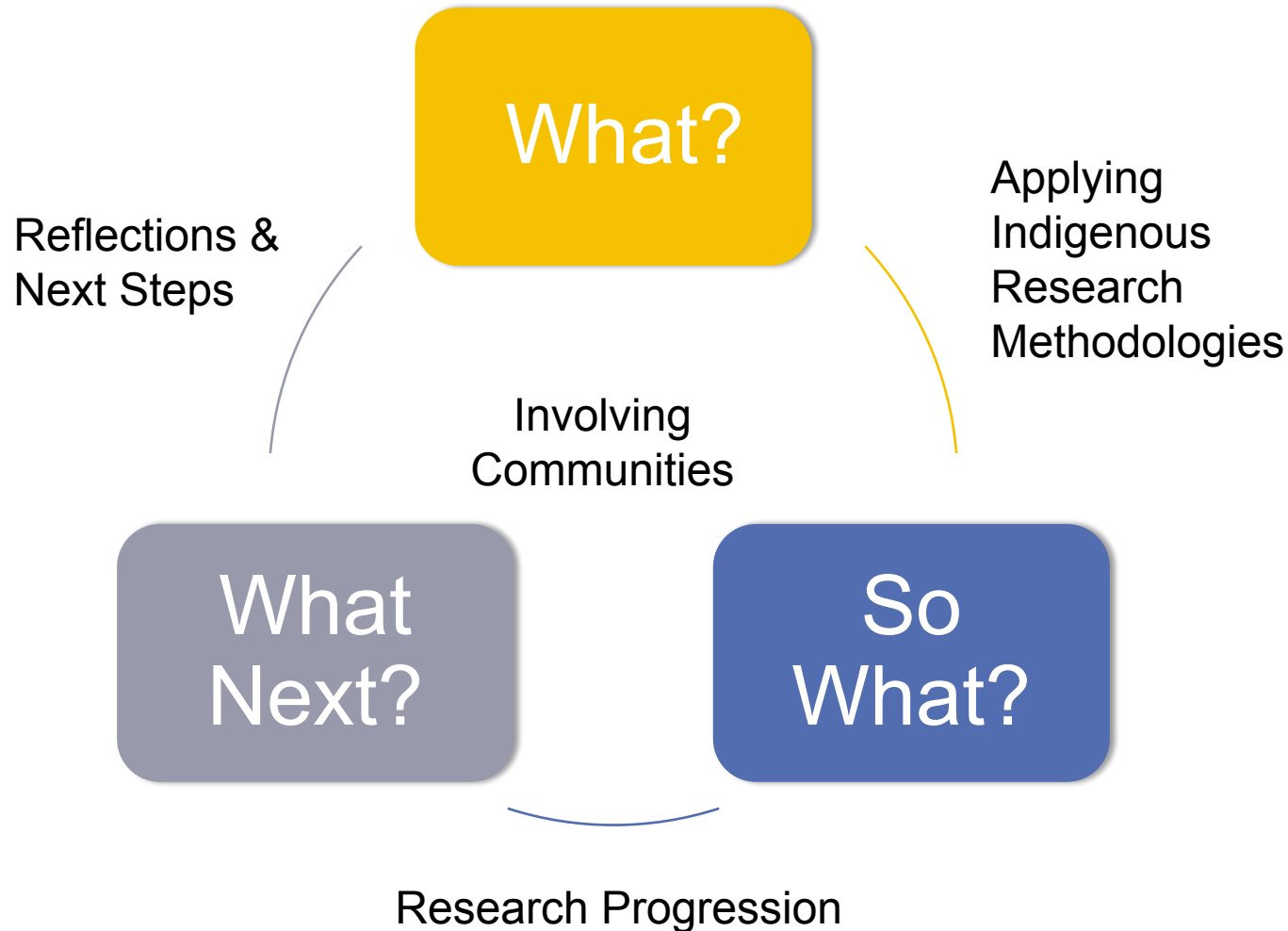
“If we learn our language, the methodology is in learning your language because then you’ll understand what the Elders are talking about. The knowledge is in the language.”

Kathy Absolon (Kovach 2009: 152)



*all images by Andrea Lyall, unless otherwise stated

K'akotlatlano'xw xa kwakwax'mas “We are going to learn about plants”



INVOLVING COMMUNITIES

- Kwakwaka'wakw communities
- 8 fluent Elders (male & female)
- 3 linguists
- 2 forest academics
- 12 photographers & botanists
- U'mista Cultural Society



Billy Peters, Baker Coon, Douglas Scow, 'Yalis, February 15, 2015

COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO RECLAIM SPACE

“‘You should put a painting on that cliff,’ they would say to me” ...

“This is when I learned that sometimes ignorance is our best ally in an endeavour”.

Marianne Nicolson
(2013: 42)



Entrance of Kingcome Inlet, BC September 2014




***Research outputs: 1. Research paper;
2. 46-page dictionary from previously published
documents; 3. Draft visual dictionary;
4. 300 words and phrases on FirstVoices***

SAMPLE ENTRY ON FIRST VOICES

- Audio of an elder speaking
- English, Kwakwala, & Latin
- Image
- literal translation into English, if available



 Kwakwala

Home / explore / Kwak'wala / Kwak'wala / Kwak'wala / learn / words / bubugwi'

bubugwi'

PART OF SPEECH: Noun | Categories: Trees

Definitions: ENGLISH:

white pine cone

Literal ENGLISH:

Translation: translates to fetus


Cultural Notes:

Pinus monticola

METADATA


AUDIO

western white pine, the cone.mp3
Description: Fluent Speaker

 0:00

MORE AUDIO INFO

PHOTO(S)



white pine cone
rosemary taylor.jpg
Description: Photographer

DZAMGILATLAN TLASUXDA T'SUT'SALTSAMX

I am going to
make jam with
the blackberries



REFLECTIONS

“A diverse range of perspectives is needed to increase the domains of use for the Kwakwala language, one of which is knowledge of plant names and words”...

“This research drew inspiration from the Kwakwala word *galgapoła* ‘to strengthen one another and lift each other up.’”

(Lyall, Nelson, Rosenblum, Turin, in press)



t̥amdza'nu “belongs to the frogs”

t̥ams “frog berries”

Wild lily of the valley *Maianthemum dilatatum*

NEXT STEPS: VERBS AND SENTENCES

CONCLUSION

I didn't set out to be interdisciplinary, but I now see value of working together across disciplines.

I am appreciative of the patience shown by community members, Elders, and linguists, and am grateful for their support.



Sunset, no filter, 'Yalis – the day before they tore down Saint Michael's Indian Residential School February 17, 2015

GILAKAS'LA!

Questions?

andrea.lyall@ubc.ca

daisy.rosenblum@ubc.ca

mark.turin@ubc.ca



SSHRC  **CRSH**



Social Sciences and
Humanities Research
Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches
en sciences humaines
du Canada

Canada

REFERENCES

FirstVoices. 2019. *FirstVoices website in Kwakwala*.

(<http://www.firstvoices.com/en/Kwakwala>) (Accessed 2019-03-01.)

Kovach, Margaret. 2009. *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Lyall, Andrea. 2014. Draft Kwakwa'la plant book. Self-published with iMac.

Lyall, Andrea & Nelson, Harry & Rosenblum, Daisy & Turin, Mark. In press. *K̓an̓k̓ot̓lat̓ano'xw xa k̓waḵwax'mas*: Linking land with language: Documenting and reclaiming Kwakwala plant names on Canada's west coast. *Language Documentation & Conservation*.

Turner, Nancy Chapman & Bell, Marcus AM. 1973. The ethnobotany of the southern Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia. *Economic Botany* 27 (3). 257-310.

U'mista Cultural Society. 2019. Kwakwaka'wakw Territory.pdf. Accessed Feb 14, 2019.

https://umistapotlatch.ca/enseignants-education/cours_1_partie_3-lesson_1_part_3-eng.php